IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-23 (Canceled).

24. (Previously Presented) A method comprising

sandwiching a mixture that comprises a liquid crystal and an uncured curable compound between a pair of substrates, and

curing the uncured curable compound to form a liquid crystal/cured composite layer,

wherein the liquid crystal has a negative dielectric anisotropy, the mixture is free of a chiral agent, the substrates have transparent electrodes, at least one substrate is transparent, and the uncured curable compound comprises a compound of formula (1):

$$A_1\text{-}(OR_1)_n\text{-}O\text{-}Z\text{-}O\text{-}(R_2O)_m\text{-}A_2 \qquad (1),$$

wherein each of A_1 and A_2, independently of each other, is an acryloyl group, a methacryloyl group, a glycidyl group or an allyl group; each of R_1 and R_2, independently of each other, is a $C_{2\text{-}6}$ alkylene group; Z is a bivalent mesogen structure; and each of n and m, independently of each other, is an integer of from 1 to 10.

25. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 24, wherein each of the substrates comprises a vertically orienting film.

26. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 25, wherein the vertically orienting films are polyimide films.

27. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 26, wherein the polyimide films face one another.

28. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 24, wherein Z is a 4,4'-biphenylene group, or a 4,4'-biphenylene group having some or all of the hydrogen atoms substituted by $C_{1\text{-}2}$ alkyl groups or halogen atoms.

29. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 24, wherein each of R_1 and R_2 is an ethylene group or a propylene group.

30. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 24, wherein each of A_1 and A_2 is an acryloyl group or a methacryloyl group.

31. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 24, wherein each of n and m is from 1 to 4.

32. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 24, wherein the uncured curable compound comprises two compounds, and the molecular weight of one compound is twice the molecular weight of another compound.

33. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 32, wherein the uncured curable compound comprises a compound having a mesogen structural portion and a curable compound containing no mesogen structural portion.

34. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 32, wherein the two compounds have curable sites connectable to each other.

35. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 32, wherein at least one of the compounds has a molecular weight of at least 1,000.

36. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 24, wherein the mixture further comprises a curing catalyst.

37. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 24, wherein the uncured curable compound comprises a plurality of compounds of formula (1) wherein n and m are different.

38. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 24, wherein the uncured curable compound comprises at least one non-liquid crystalline compound.

39. (Previously Presented) A light control element prepared by the method according to Claim 24.

BASIS FOR THE AMENDMENT

The present application is a CPA of parent application U.S. Application Serial No. 09/807,425. Claims 24-39 are active in the present application. Claims 1-23 are canceled claims. Claims 17-32 were presented in the Preliminary Amendment submitted on June 10, 2003 with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. Responsive to a telephone discussion with the Examiner on June 25, 2003 it was agreed that the claims would be renumbered beginning at Claim 24. Claims 24-39 are duplicates of Claims 17-32 submitted on June 10, 2003. The claims were renumbered in view of the Preliminary Amendment filed with the Office on July 3, 2001 which added new Claims 17-23. No new matter has been added.